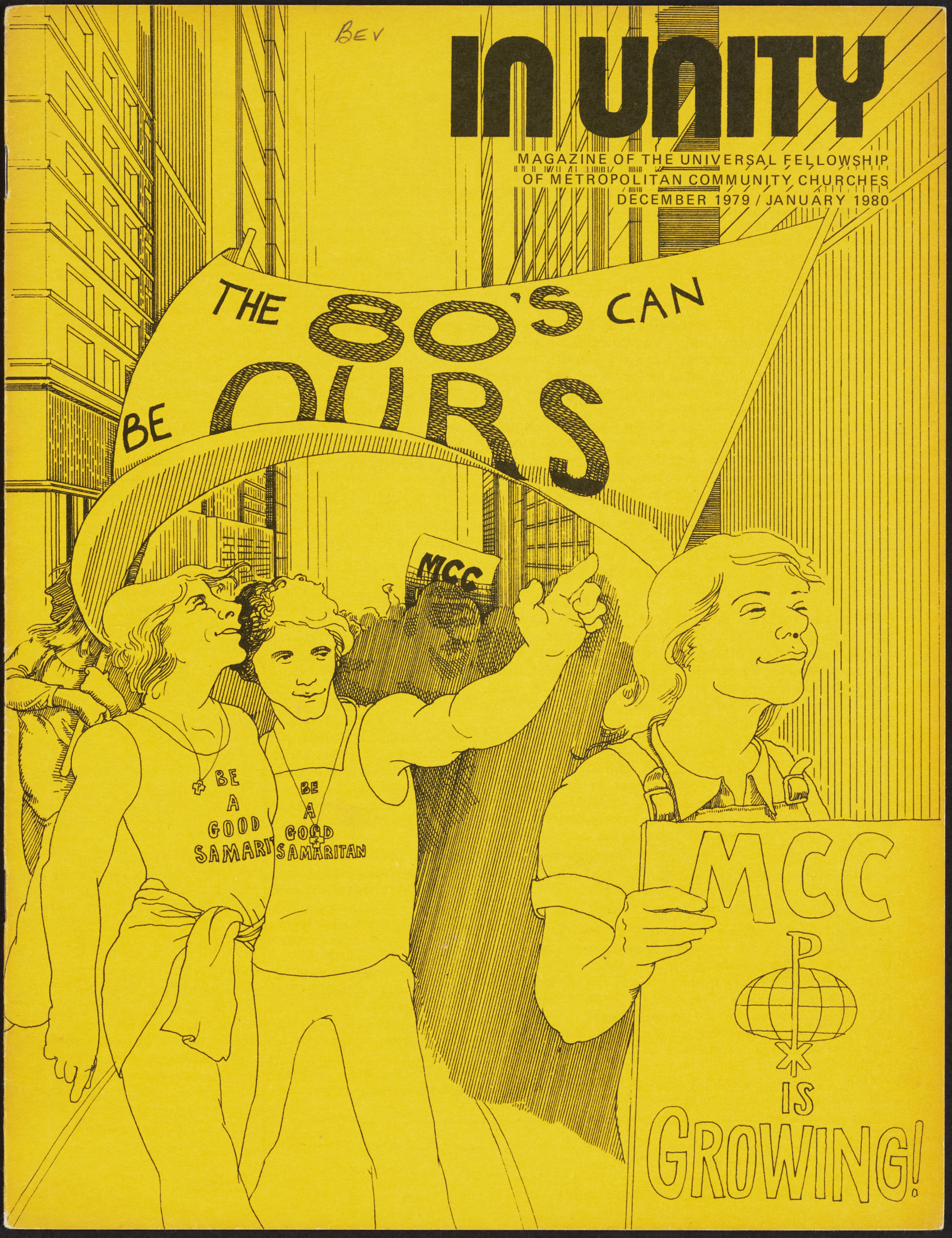

IN UNITY

MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP
OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES
DECEMBER 1979 / JANUARY 1980

TURN NOT BACK

BY Rev. Elder John H. Hose

"I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
God's mercy underlies " --*John Greenleaf Whittier*

General Conference IX--the celebration of the first decade of the UFMCC--indulged the participants in a backward look to see where we had come from. In many ways, it was a delightful trip into nostalgia for some, an initial exposure for others. But far more significantly, GCIX afforded all of us an opportunity to look joyously, albeit somewhat apprehensively, forward.

The document presented by the Board of Elders (the non-white paper) reached into the future, projecting goals and ideals for the next decade, rather than rehearsing the past. It presented a soul-searching document in which we asked ourselves: "Just how do we get on about doing the Lord's business?" Further, we said:

> *We live in a time when all creation groans for reunion with God, and it is in just such a time that we seek to reflect God's love for all, that God's kingdom may come here on earth.*

We were so bold as to delineate what appear to be reasonable goals--in the best 20th Century tradition. We envisioned new congregations, training and developing ministers and lay people to lead this great evangel. Renewal and revival, restatements of objectives, and most importantly to "witness" to the whole world.

To this end, we projected what we called "PROJECT SAMARIA." Based on John 4:1-34, we stated:

> *PROJECT SAMARIA would lead the journey of the UFMCC through many Samaritan territories, so that in journeying through each we might confront the barriers within us, relying on the truth to free us and allowing the touch of Christ to heal us. If we are to proclaim the gospel to all nations we must, individually and collectively, face the truth of self disclosure . . .*

It sounded a clarion call and a challenge to us. Now, as we prepare to really move into that decade of discovery, we must ask ourselves some searching questions. There are those who feel we have "lost the vision," that we tend to bog down in institutionalization. Implicit in that kind of expression is the suggestion that the Fellowship is not reaching the people it should, that we are not growing. But it does raise some questions to which there must be answers if we nourish the faintest hope of implementing Project Samaria.

Anent PROJECT SAMARIA, we thus pose these questions:

(1) Was the whole schematic mere rhetoric, designed to impress others and ourselves that we are a progressive group?

(2) Have we lost the vision which God revealed to Troy Perry?

(3) More importantly, have we thought about the cost?

I can't answer these questions for you, nor for the other members of the Board of Elders. I do know that since General Conference, 15 new congregations have been started, and many others are examining their priorities to proclaim God's love and salvation to ever-expanding communities. I can speak for myself that I believe we "have not lost the vision." Some--who are new to this Fellowship--may need to be told what the vision is. (Ed. note: *We have procured 1,000 copies of Rev Perry's book, and they will be available from UFMCC offices on a first-come, first-served basis.)* My very real concern is with the third question: Have we thought about the cost?

I prefaced this article with the words from an early New England poet, John Greenleaf Whittier. He muses about how comforting it is to know that we can't really know what the future has in store, but we can be sure God's mercy and grace are the only realities! For the answer to this question, we might do well to turn to another New England poet, James Russell Lowell who wrote:

> *By the light of burning martyrs,*
> *Christ, Thy bleeding feet we track,*
> *Toiling up new Calvaries ever*
> *With the cross that turns not back;*
> *New occasions teach new duties,*
> *Time makes ancient good uncouth;*
> *They must upward still and onward*
> *Who would keep abreast of truth*

I understand that the poet is telling us that we progress only when we understand and show willingness to count the cost. If we really believe that God has chosen us to remind the rest of the world of the essential meaning of God's inclusive love, we have to be willing to pay the price. Read and re-read that line which states, "Time makes ancient good uncouth." You can't afford to rest on your laurels (that's a nice phrase for describing lethargic behavior.)

DON'T LOOK BACK! You, too, can become a pillar of salt. We want to challenge the future. . .we MUST challenge the future. We've said it in so many ways: "We've A Story To Tell To the Nations," ". . .Think On These Things," "For Such A Time As This." They can all become empty slogans, full of sound and fury signifying nothing. The young David said it centuries ago: "Have we not a cause?"

It is our hope that PROJECT SAMARIA is not just dream or fantasy, but a necessity if Christ is to survive in a world gone mad with its own importance. We cannot put aside the past, but we must use it as a stepping stone into the future. We have always been commissioned as Christ-followers and adherents to respond to the great commission to go "over, even unto Samaria," keeping in mind that Samaria is any place where the oppressed may be--even across the street.

-- Papa John

IN UNITY

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Third World Conference

...personal viewpoint

By Renee McCoy

"When will the ignorance end? When will the ignorance end?" The melody was simple, almost trite. Not so the man who wrote and sang the song, a big Black man named Blackberri. The voice that came from his six-foot plus frame was surprisingly gentle, passionate, yet, full of strength, full of violence and the unresolved pain that grows inside someone who has touched, with the same hand, his/her Blackness, his/her gayness, his/her oppression and that of other Third World brothers and sisters.

"Tell me when!", he sang. "I wanna know when!", his song continued to demand. The room was full of people who shared his urgency to unveil an answer. That's why we had gathered at the Harambee Hotel in Washington, D.C. for the first National Third World Lesbian/Gay Conference. It was October 11, 1979.

The Conference began with an evening of culture in the Rahama Ballroom. Rahama is Swahili for "Peace" and a Spirit of peace soon filled the corners of the room. The cultural event pridefully stretched the length of diversity within the Third World Gay community. Displays of talent ranged from drag to gospel (although I'm not sure they are at opposite ends of the spectrum), from classical dance to blues singing, from poetry to jazz to disco. As a Black Christian Lesbian who has been involved in a journey towards freedom, I felt for the first time in a long time that I had come to a place where I would find rest. I looked around the room and at the people and saw God's rainbow Spirit rocking to the beats of the music, applauding the words, joining in celebration, song and struggle. There were people from every race, every economic and social level, every part of the country, gathered in one room to deal with one thing: Third World Lesbians and Gay men in this society.

I looked around the room at the people and knew that God's goodness and grace alone could have made such a gathering possible. I felt with certainty that God had not meant for any people to be oppressed. The energy, the power, the hope that filled that room was phenomenal. It was like the beginning of a worship service, Church was starting and was to continue for three more days and nights. Through the beauty and diversity in that room of peace, God's amazing grace had arrived and decided to stay and grow.

The Conference continued the next day with workshops on the Latin American Gay Liberation Movement, Black Gay Men in the South, Gay American Indians Information, Lesbian and Gay Asian-American Research and Gay Catholics. These were followed by ethnic caucuses. Latin Americans, Native American Indians, Blacks, Asian Americans and non-Third World people got together in their own spaces to investigate their particular needs and gifts to this struggle for liberation. The afternoon brought more workshops on racism, the Chicano identity, Lesbian feminism and more. There were also gender caucuses for men, women and transpersons.

After dinner that same evening, we all came together in a general session to hear Marion Berry, Mayor of Washington, D.C., and to share what went on in the various caucuses and what was going on around the country. The mayor failed to show but sent a beautiful representative to whom this writer did not mind listening at all. She spoke of the many positive changes Gays in D.C. have experienced and of the mayor's plans for more and greater consciousness raising programs. She told of the mayor's dedication to address human rights of all people regardless of sexual orientation. She ended her presentation by reading Mayor Berry's proclamation making the week of October 10-17, 1979, "Gay Rights Awareness Week" in Washington, D.C.

Sharing the experiences of the other people who attended the Conference was extremely powerful and life-giving. The Asian Americans talked of how painful their experiences had been. They spoke of having no support systems in their communities of isolation; of familial rejection. The most mind and heart shattering group to address the general session, however, was the Latin caucus. Their representatives were from Mexico City. They talked of the horrors they face as Lesbians and Gay men living in a country that kills and imprisons. They told of the horrors of being colonized subjects in a classist, racist, homophobic society which daily drove them farther into closets with doors too thick. We listened. We remembered. Each and everyone of us identified with the hopelessness they had experienced. Still, each of us knew the joy that was being born in that room to discover hundreds of Third World Lesbians and Gay men with whom to share our journey and touch our pains. We listened to each other and some of us for the first time felt a connection; that we were no longer alone. We were not crazy for having a vision of unity. Together we danced the dances of celebration, victory, life. The worship service continued.

Saturday morning found many of us literally holding one another up as we diligently trucked to and through the Harambee Hotel for more workshops. Saturday morning workshops included gay teenagers, alcoholism, transpersons, prisons and more. They were followed by regional caucuses and more workshops.

REV. PERRY TO LEAD MARCH

Rev. Elder Troy Perry will lead a 168 mile march from Jacksonville, Florida to the Capitol in Tallahassee on March 19-21, 1980 for gay civil rights and in support of MCC Tallahassee. Recently MCC in Tallahassee has come under attack from Rev. Gerald Sutek, who committed himself and his congregation to "running MCC Tallahassee out of town." Rev. Lee Carlton from Jacksonville debated Rev. Sutek on local T.V. MCC Tallahassee, under the leadership of Bob Angell, Worship Coordinator, held a "lights for rights" vigil on October 14. Angell said, "It was suggested that I hold our regular 11 a.m. worship service somewhere else in the city. I prayed about this, and the Lord will not let me do that. We will be in the sanctuary of this church at 11 a.m. Sunday as always. We will not be driven out of this house of worship, nor this city . . . God is with us."

UPDATE: Because Rev. Sutek also made prejudicial and inflammatory remarks about the Catholic Church, the insurance company that insures the church he pastors cancelled their policy stating that they were inviting violence and possible damage to church property.

THIRD WORLD CONFERENCE

The workshops on religious issues was led by Dr. James Tirney of Howard University and myself from MCC New York. It was attended by Rev. Karen Ziegler, Rev. Shelley Hamilton and Rev. Lucia Chappelle, all UFMCC ministers, along with a variety of other religious leaders. The workshop eventually turned into a rap group with everyone sharing experiences as Third World Gays in mainline churches. We shared the need to find ways of defining Third World Gay spirituality so that we can be more aware of what we have to offer towards building a new theology of leberation. We seemed to all share that "That Ole Time Religion" ain't good enough for us any longer. Some of us also felt a need to discover, from the histories of our own people, written documents to supplement the Bible. There were good and valuable insights into God buried in Third World cultures that modern Christianity has for centuries sought to quash. We discussed giving life again to the beauty and energy of our ancestors' spirituality.

The evening ended with another General Session opened with a variety of entertainment, including Rev. Delores Berry, MCC Baltimore, singing "Amazing Grace." Rev. Berry sang with her usual dignity, pride and beauty "Amazing grace, how sweet. . ."

The worship--oops! general session--continued by featuring Audre Lorde as keynote speaker. Audre Lorde is a Black Lesbian feminist poet who teaches at City University of New York. She has written numerous books of poetry and her poetry appears in many anthologies and periodicals. Her accomplishments are many and varied but all go to make one proud to know her and to hear her speak.

Ms. Lorde began her address by saying that "the ignorance will end when each one of us begins to seek out and trust the knowledge deep inside us, when we dare to go into the chaos which exists before understanding and come back with new tools for action and change." She went on to talk about the pains of fear and isolation that exists in Third World communities and the importance of actively addressing and removing that pain. She said that just because our oppressions are diverse is no reason for us to separate them. She said, "between ourselves, difference must not be used to separate us but to generate energy for social change at the same time as we preserve our individuality." The sermon. The call to make faith active.

Although the conference did not end officially until Monday, it ended for this writer and others who share my financial insecurities, with the March on Washington. The March was led by Third World Women all of whom had attended the Conference. Many of us attended worship services at MCC Washington, D.C., that evening.

In closing, I want to state that this Conference truly changed my life. Through it I gained energy and hope renewed to not go crazy while working within a white institution such as UFMCC. So often Third World people in UFMCC just accept that few will understand, few will explore, few will care to touch what we are about in this community. We accept isolation and partial inclusiveness as a fact of UFMCC life. Our attitudes have ranged from "grin and bear it" to "scowl and kill it." At the Third World Conference a vision was validated. Hope was rekindled that together we can create a spirit which liberates Third World and non-Third World people alike. The way was made realer, clearer, more possible.

On October 11-15, 1979, 487 Native American Indians, Asian Americans, Latin Americans, Black Americans and White Americans gathered at the Harambee Hotel to begin a search to end the ignorance. Four hundred eighty-seven people from 38 US states and four countries gathered at the Harambee Hotel. Harambee--Swahili for "Unity."

The Bottom Line

t. earlye scott

Since I'm not teaching anymore and trying to get a successful writing career started, you might say that I'm unemployed. Unemployment offers fringe benefits that working doesn't. One such benefit is plenty of time to do the things I want to do. So, I was able to be in the March on Washington.

***

CHANT RHYTHMICALLY--left, left, left, right, left. . . (as many times as you want).

Enter 100,000 lesbian and gay men, marching 8 abreast (we had fun figuring out what that meant). Now this estimate of 100,000 was not easily arrived at. Some newspapers reported 25,000, the radio said 50,000, the police said 75,000 and the park authorities said 80,000. The most accurate figure of 100,000 came from Troy Perry who said he counted everyone! I believe Troy! Don't you? Anyway, there were lots of us. In fact, more of us showed up to demand our rights than went to see the Pope. That ain't bad!

This was the first time I ever participated in any sort of demonstration unless you count the time I helped boycott the college union because they wouldn't allow card playing in the cafeteria.

Marching was a great experience for me. I wasn't even afraid. There were gays everywhere. Tall ones, short ones, skinny ones and everything in between. We carried bright banners and wore colorful buttons. We chanted and sang and smiled and I got blisters on my feet. I figured I got blisters because I'd never demonstrated before, except that one time I told you about but, I didn't march then. . .just boycotted like I said. (How sore did my feet get, you ask? My feet got so sore that after the March I took off my shoes and ended up walking through mud. Ugh. That was gross. Really gross! It did make my feet feel better. Then, I took a taxi back to my hotel--riding was nice. Think I'll suggest cars and floats for the next march. More comfortable, I think.)

I was telling you what a great experience the March was. I felt real free. I liked that. As I marched I knew that if I had still been a teacher, I wouldn't have been there. I felt real sad about that. And just when I was thinking that, I saw two men standing along the sidelines watching. They had paper bags on their heads with holes cut out so they could see and breathe but no one would know them. That really made me think. I had to stop thinking that so I joined in with the rest singing, "Jesus Loves Me." We were passing some signs saying we would burn in hell, etc. There were only two of these signs which I thought was a pretty dismal showing from the opposition. But, they keep trying. They certainly are trying! Very trying!

***

Since my mind began wandering to teaching again, I decided to let you in on where it was wandering.

Recently I received a letter from a former student of mine who had quit corresponding with me because she got angry. Her anger came when she heard "the rumor" that I was gay. She wasn't angry that I was gay. She was angry because I hadn't confided in her.

Her letter was filled with apologies saying I was right not to tell her but if and when I wanted to, she'd listen.

She said she didn't care if I was gay, straight, pregnant or dating a married man! She just wanted to be my friend. Isn't that sweet!

ELDERS' MINUTES

are now available through
Subscription

In accordance with a resolution passed at General Conference, the minutes of Elders' meetings will now be provided to individuals or churches by the Fellowship Offices at a yearly subscription rate of $7.50 ($4.00 for any single set). We will bill only churches; individuals are requested to please remit a check or money order made out to UFMCC with their subscription order.

To begin this year's series of minutes (October '79 to October '80), please send your name, address, and check or money order to:

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a meditation

by Rev. Jeffrey D. Pulling
Dean, Samaritan Theological Institute

One of the perennial themes of Christmas cards and carols is peace. This seems only appropriate since Christmas is the celebration of the birth of the one who was prophesied to be the "Prince of peace" (Isaiah 9:6). And we remember the song of "peace on earth" that the choir of angels sang at the birth of Jesus (Luke 2.13-14). Peace is a lovely holiday sentiment, but what does it mean? What is this peace that God gives to us through Christ Jesus? Is this inner peace, peace with God, peace among human beings, or what?

If we examine Jesus' recorded words in the Gospels, we find some surprising utterances about peace. In the Gospel of John, Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (14:27). "I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (16:33).

Contrast that to: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a person's foes will be those of their own household" (Matthew 10:34-36; also Luke 12:51-53).

The kind of peace that Christ Jesus gave was obviously not then what we commonly think of as peace, that is harmony and good feeling among all. The kind of peace that Jesus spoke of giving to his followers was more than a truce or armistice. It had a more active meaning than freedom from strife, hostility, and war. Peace is not passive tranquility, but rather active reconciliation.

For Jesus, the achievement of peace means struggle, not avoidance of conflict and controversy. This does not, of course, mean violence or armed resistance. The "sword" referred to in Matthew 10:34 means "division", as is pointed out in the parallel passage in Luke 12:51. People are called to decide whether or not they are going to follow the Christ. Because people do not all make the same choice, division is inevitable. Jesus does not smooth everything over so that all is "hunky-dorey". No, Jesus calls us to look at ourselves honestly and to make some hard decisions.

Peace does not come cheaply. Note that that the seventh Beatitude is "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9). It is peacemakers, not peace-lovers or peaceful people. It is those who make peace who are blessed. The popular idea of a peace-maker is someone who pours oil on troubled waters. We who are peace-lovers will go to any length to protect the illusion that peace already exists and must not be broken. This means not solving problems and disagreements, but hiding them. Instead of restoring or bringing forth love, we preach good manners and polite formalities. The result is compromise and avoidance. Popular opinion notwithstanding, there is a difference between a peacemaker and a trouble-ducker. William Barclay in his book The Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer for Everyman wrote:

> "What this beatitude demands is not the passive acceptance of things because we are afraid of the trouble of doing anything about them, but the active facing of things and the making of peace, even when the way to peace is through struggle."

Compromise of principles is easy, but it is a cheap substitute for reconciliation. Peace-making is hard work, but that is how reconciliation happens.

God did not passively wait around for peace to happen between God and humankind. God did not avoid dealing with human sinfulness and demonic evil. God did not compromise the principles of justice and righteousness. Rather God actively pursued peace with us by coming to us in Christ Jesus. God entered the world and fully participated in the human situation. God-in-Christ struggled, suffered, and died on our behalf so that we might be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5.17-21; Colossians 1:19-22). Making peace is not a passive act, as Paul so strikingly points out in Romans 16:20 - ". . .the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet."

Peace then is not giving in and accepting things as they are. Peace comes through living and struggling. Peace is the result of our justification by faith (Romans 5:1). Peace is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5.22-23). Peace is the substance of the proclaimed Gospel (Acts 19:36; Ephesians 6:15). Christ is our peace (Ephesians 2:14); Christ is our means of reconciliation with God. Peace with God is the most important thing in human existence, and it enables us to have peace with others and peace within.

This is the peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7). This is the peace which the world cannot give (John 14.27). This is the peace which Christ Jesus came to give us. Thank God for sending us the Prince of peace!

"Now may the Lord of peace give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all" (2 Thessalonians 3:16).

truck donated to ufmcc

LOS ANGELES -- The UFMCC recently received a gift of a large delivery truck.

Donated by Golden Distributing/Maya Corp., distributors of Coors beer in Central Los Angeles and much of Hollywood, the truck was accepted by Reverend Troy D. Perry, founder of the MCC, at the Fellowship's headquarters in Hollywood. Reverend Perry stated that, "I am delighted to accept this truck on behalf of the gay community in Los Angeles, and I recognize it as a token of friendship and cooperation between our people and the Coors organization."

Perry added that, "The use of this fine truck will mark, in a real way, the end of the long boycott against Coors products. We have seen changes, in both policy and practice regarding gays, within the Coors brewery and its distributors. They have made a great effort to understand our concerns and objectives, and have opened their arms to us. It is time we did the same toward them."

The truck is a 1965 Chevrolet bobtail delivery van with a 16,000 pound capacity. Prior to handing over the keys, Joe Benites, vice president and general manager of Golden Distributing, had the truck reconditioned, refurbished and painted with the Fellowship's identification. According to Benites, "We fully recognize the need to support and participate in our various communities' activities, and are proud to add this new program to the others already underway in our area."

Attending the presentation in front of MCC headquarters are (left to right) Emiel Adels, owner of the Stud in Hollywood, CA; Jack Briare, co-owner of the Pure Trash in Hollywood, CA; Phil Cooper, owner of the Outcast in Hollywood, CA; Reverend Troy D. Perry, founder of the MCC; Don Storr, co-owner of the Pure Trash; Mike Mock, owner of the One-Way in Hollywood, CA; Joe Benites, vice president and general manager of Golden Distributing/Coors Beer, and Jim Octave, special accounts manager, Golden Distributing/Coors Beer.

clergy corner

Editor's Note:

Rev. Elder Freda Smith, vice moderator of the Board of Elders and pastor of MCC Sacramento, spent parts of October and November visiting various churches in the Fellowship.

We thank her for sharing her experiences with us.

Rev. Elder Freda Smith

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

What can I say? We were all there in Washington D.C. - marching - all ages - all sizes - all colors - all occupations - all sexes - from everywhere -- 2¼ hundred thousand was the estimate from the mall police. I, who have marched in the ¼ million participant San Francisco Gay Pride Parades, have never been in a larger crowd of gay people. I say this with all sincerity - I was there. Troy spoke at the peak attendance point. The last of the one hour and fifteen minute long parade had arrived and those who would soon be leaving had not yet started to go. He caught their attention and spoke to their hearts as Troy can do - and does. Although hoarse and close to losing his voice at times, he was magnificent. The crowd was hushed, then broke into applause. A young man from St. Paul, Minnesota who was there later told me, "It was the biggest crowd I have ever seen - and I can remember when I thought I was the only one." He added. "When I was in high school - scratched in my desk was: 'Harry is a hopeless homo' - that is not true - now I know I have hope."

There was a surge of new energy among all of the people from MCC groups all around the world who were gathered there - but this energy was not confined to the March and the rally. It was only a reflection of what I have experienced as I travelled during the next month.

Following the elders' meeting in Washington, D.C. Kathleen and I flew to Minneapolis - St. Paul. Rev. Marshall Williams was installed as Pastor and signed a three year contract with the Minneapolis congregation in a moving ceremony on October 21, which left scarcely a dry eye in the house. Representatives from the Twin Cities religious community as well as from their gay community were in attendance. I was the officiating Elder - while Rev. Brenda Cisneros - Hunt, assistant district coordinator, represented the district. All of the Twin City area was ablaze with riotous (and I do mean literally riotous) Autumn color - and scores of crystalline lakes reflected the startling clear blue of the skies. It was breathtaking. St. Paul was coping well with the announced election of their founding pastor Rev. Brenda Cisneros - Hunt to the Detroit, Michigan pulpit. Although they will miss Brenda and Rita greatly, the congregation had an air of excitement about them as they planned together their pulpit search and their interim program.

The worship services in both Minneapolis and St. Paul were replete with that extraordinary talent which exists in all of our MCC congregations. Again and again I am struck by how the exception is truly the rule among us. I do not know of one congregation in our fellowship which is not blessed by exceptional talent in its members. St. Paul surprised us with their own "Guitars Unlimited" playing for us.

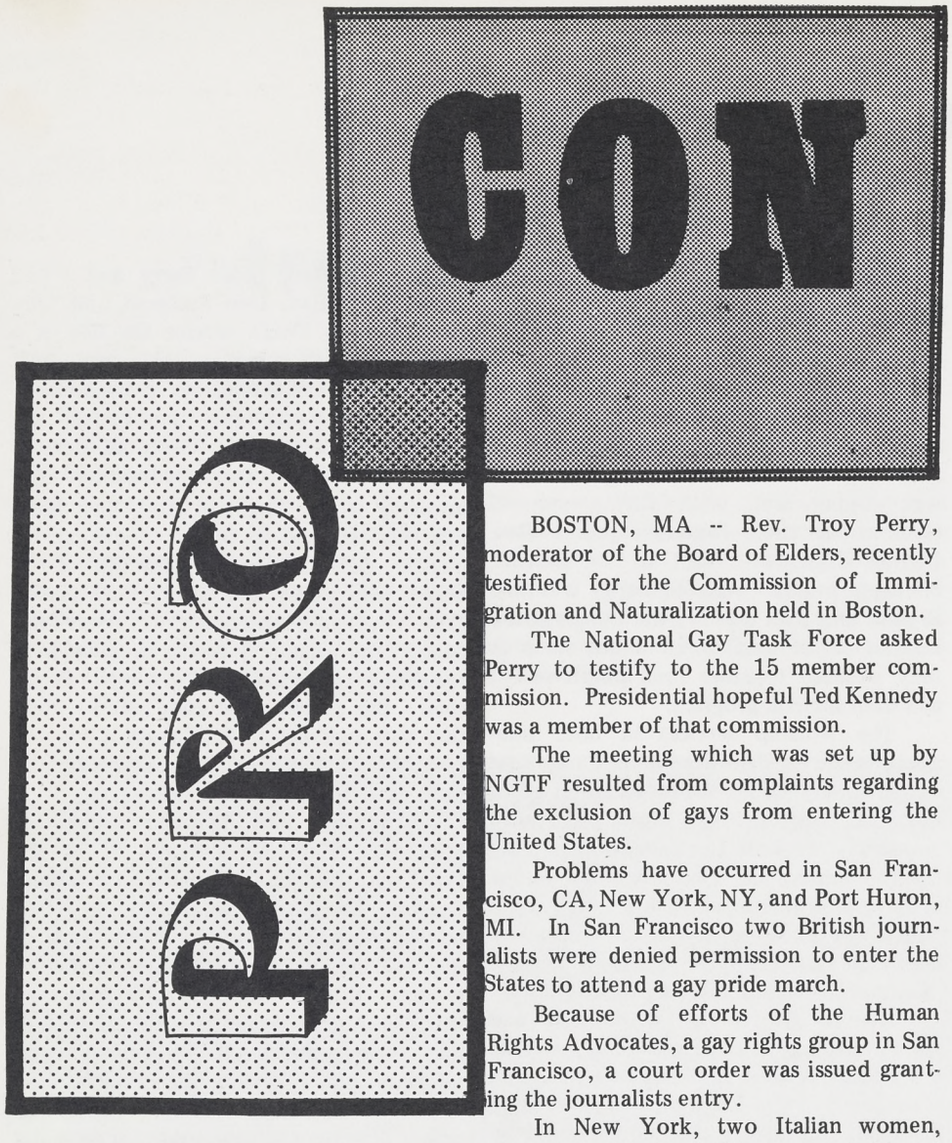
Denver greeted us with snow and storm warnings in the mountains, but that did not deter Rev. Elder Charlie Arehart's plans for a day in the mountains. Packing Kathleen and myself into his 4 wheel drive Subaru, he took us to the top of the Rockies. Charlie will always get where he's determined to go. We had five beautiful Spiritual Renewal services in Denver and had the opportunity to worship with Rev. Jo Anne Monti and the Boulder church as well as Worship Coordinator Joyce Setala and the Colorado Springs group. The Mid-Central District has caught fire with the great commission. Jan Kross from Denver, (an exhorter), is undertaking a feasibility study in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and we had the opportunity to pray with her before she left to take on that responsibility.

Be it ever so humble (and it isn't - and never has been) there's no place like Dallas. Troy and I spent the weekend of November 2-4 at the Ordination Celebration for Rev. Don Eastman. Representatives from all over the South Central District - as well as the new group in Little Rock, Arkansas and W.C. Jerry Motto were in attendance - and what an attendance!! There was a full orchestra complete with kettle drums as well as the inimitable Dallas Choir and other musicians bringing solos. A hush fell over the record attendance when Rev. Elder Perry and I laid hands upon Rev. Don Eastman, and Troy dedicated to God's service the life of a brilliant young executive who turned his back upon a brilliant career in the field of human service and took upon himself the yoke of Christ for the Glory of God to labor in the fields of our community. Not knowing where God will lead, Rev. Eastman has resolved to follow. How can we possibly fail when we have the best of the best - who gladly and firmly have placed their hands to the plow and will never look back? The solemnity of the moment held the entire congregation as in a spell - God's spell - the gospel - the good news - when that vast audience took a breath it was one breath. The celebration following the ordination took all afternoon.

November 8th through November 11th saw Kathleen and myself at the Northwest District Conference in Portland, Oregon. The Northwest District has got to be the biggest, friendliest family imaginable. When they get together its family re-union time. They joyfully re-elected Rev. A. Austin Amerine - this time to a three year term as the Fellowship's first full-time paid District Coordinator (the Northwest District churches voluntarily tithe 5% to the District to pay for this) and spent many happy hours planning next June's week-long spiritual retreat conference in the Redwoods. Attendance is expected to exceed 150 and seminars by Rosalind Rinker, Troy Perry and John Hose will highlight the activity-filled week. Rev. Don Borbe and the Portland church outdid themselves with their hospitality - serving three gourmet meals a day to an entire district which rated this conference as one of the greatest spiritual highs ever.

As you can see - Kathleen and I came home tired but stirred deeply by the sense of spiritual renewal and revitalization throughout the fellowship. The new works are but a symptom of the new work in lives and faith that is being wrought throughout the country - and I am sure - the world. The 80's are ours! God has laid a conviction upon my heart that we are the new reformation of the Christian Church. We have but to claim it - and I see evidence of this claim everywhere.

In Christ
In Struggle
Rev. Freda Smith
Romans 8:28



When speaking to the U.S. Bishops, Pope John Paul II said, "You. . .rightly stated: 'Homosexual activity, as distinguished from homosexual orientation, is morally wrong. In clarity of this truth, you have exemplified the real charity of Christ. You did not betray those people who, because of homosexuality, are confronted with difficult moral problems, as would have happened if, in the name of understanding and compassion, or for any other reason, you had held out false hope to any brother and sister.' "

Leaders of Dignity have said this is the first time in history that a Pope has publicly stated, to the world, the distinction between the condition of homosexuality and acts of homosexuality.

***

It has been recently discovered that Eleanor Roosevelt wrote over 3,000 intimate letters to her friend and traveling companion Lorena Hickok. A debate has begun about the "relationship" between the two friends. The above ground press has reported that the Roosevelt family has refused to comment.

BOSTON, MA -- Rev. Troy Perry, moderator of the Board of Elders, recently testified for the Commission of Immigration and Naturalization held in Boston.

The National Gay Task Force asked Perry to testify to the 15 member commission. Presidential hopeful Ted Kennedy was a member of that commission.

The meeting which was set up by NGTF resulted from complaints regarding the exclusion of gays from entering the United States.

Problems have occurred in San Francisco, CA, New York, NY, and Port Huron, MI. In San Francisco two British journalists were denied permission to enter the States to attend a gay pride march.

Because of efforts of the Human Rights Advocates, a gay rights group in San Francisco, a court order was issued granting the journalists entry.

In New York, two Italian women, suspected of being lesbians, were held and their luggage searched.

A similar incident took place in Port Huron when 85 Canadian women were detained or prohibited from entering the U.S. to attend the Women's Music Festival in Michigan.

Boston MCC agreed to pay for Perry's flight to Boston.

***

LOS ANGELES, CA -- The Walker and Struman Research Inc. of Los Angeles recently surveyed 73,000 readers of homosexual magazines. They found that a household of 1.4 persons had an income of $23,600. This is 50% above the national average. Eighty percent own at least one car, 79% fly on commercial airlines an average of four times a year and 70% are college graduates.

***

Dr. Joyce Brothers, a leading psychologist, has said that homosexuals are turning into an angry minority. THE LOS ANGELES TIMES reported that Brothers said "Any group that has been oppressed for any period of time is tempted to give up. But when they can see a light at the end of the tunnel and there's a real chance of achieving equality there's a reason to go on. That makes them more emotional."

***

The United Methodist Church's General Board of Church and Society has requested a major shift in their policy on homosexuality. They recommended to the 1980 General Conference that the statement which rejects practicing homosexuality as "incompatible with Christian teaching" be changed to say that the issue is open for reexamination. Their stand has been primarily as a defense against ordination of practicing homosexuals.

The commission on the Status of Women rejected "sexual orientation" as a factor in their employment practices. They said that homosexuals would not be discriminated in its hiring and personnel policies.

***

ALBUQUERQUE, NM -- The alumni committee of the University of New Mexico decided that men could not participate in the Homecoming Queen contest.

Jim Meyer, a senior, was denied entry because according to the alumni association his entry came too late to alter the policy regarding the selection of a queen.

Earlier in the year a Georgia Southern College student was elected "queen." Patrick Felter competed with five women for the title.

***

INDIANAPOLIS, IN -- The delegates to the Free Methodist World Convocation recently passed a resolution opposing any legislation that would make homosexual conduct a legitimate lifestyle.

***

MIAMI, FL -- Bob Kunst, a gay activist, is again trying to get a gay rights ordinance passed by popular vote. He is seeking support for a sexual rights referendum to take place during the March, 1980 presidential primaries in Florida, Georgia and Alabama.

Kunst announced recently that he is forming a group called Congress United for Rights and Equality (CURE) to counteract Anita Bryant's group, Citizens Against Unacceptable Sex Education (CAUSE).

***

WASHINGTON, DC -- Rep. Larry McDonald (D-GA), a mouthpiece for the homophobic lobby Christian Voice, is planning to introduce legislation allowing employers to fire gays.

ST. PAUL, MN -- A former elementary school teacher was denied collecting damages from a parochial school which refused him employment because of his homosexuality.

The District Court of Ramsey County, ruled that the school and its superintendent could not be sued for violation of St. Paul's human rights ordinance.

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NEW YORK, NY -- Harrison J. Goldin, city controller, told a meeting of the Greater Gotham Business Council that it would make good sense financially to include the gay community in the national promotion of New York City as a tourist attraction.

***

"The Baxters," a new comedy series, produced by Norman Lear, began their season debut with a situation involving a gay teacher who participated in a gay rights demonstration. The program dealt with the question of whether or not the teacher should be fired. The Baxter family debated this issue and following the sketch, the audience continued the debate.

In the audience were Elders Nancy Wilson and Jeri Ann Harvey. Wilson's comments were aired.

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BOSTON' MA -- Boston City Hospital's Intensive Care Unit now allows gay lovers visitation rights. Most hospitals only allow "immediate family" but Boston has changed their policy to include "significant others."

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HARTFORD, CN -- The Gay Activist Alliance has convinced WOR-TV to edit and "bleep" out anti-gay remarks made by Evangelist James Robinson on his weekly radio program. Robert Fennimore, general manager of WOR-TV, says "If Robinson continues to attack homosexuals. . .he's going to be taken off the air."

***

SACRAMENTO, CA -- California Governor Jerry Brown recently appointed an openly gay man to the Superior Court in Los Angeles. It is believed that this is the first time an avowed homosexual has received such an appointment.

Jerry Laeks, 39, has been a Juvenile Court commissioner and active in pro-gay organizations in Southern California.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA -- Lambda, a citizen's band radio group has been conducting a surveillance service on and around gay beats in Sydney. They are stepping up their efforts due to an increase in violence against gays.

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WORCESTER, MA -- MCC Worcester has announced that a gay radio program will begin in their city. WCUW, an independent educational foundation is dedicated to the exploration and improvement of the radio medium in the Worcester area.

Music, poetry and news will be featured in this once a week program.

***

UTAH -- According to homosexuals in Utah, The Mormon Church is making attempts to alienate them and drive them out. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints presently excommunicates homosexuals.

Allegations have been brought against the church run school, Brigham Young University, for harrassment of homosexuals.

***

The House of Bishops in the Episcopal Church in the United States has decided not to endorse a resolution saying they would ordain homosexuals. Three years ago the church approved a resolution endorsing full civil rights for gays.

***

CALIFORNIA -- The first university gay newspaper/magazine has begun publication at U.C.L.A. TENPERCENT will be published by the communications Board of the Associated Students Union of U.C.L.A.

***

By Rev. Bob Arthur

Several years ago, a Connecticut based organization folded and requested us to take over a project they had begun under the name of PRISONERS YELLOW PAGES' They had been working in conjunction with the Playboy Foundation to produce it, and when they decided it was impossible for them to continue, Playboy Foundation continued to compile information until they realized that it was too big a task for their scope of interest.

So Playboy Foundation forwarded all the materials they had to us, and we compiled a first edition which was mailed out to prisoners upon request. A second edition was compiled in 1978 and with financial help from Playboy Foundation we were again able to mail it out to prisoners free upon request, and sold it to non-prisoners for $3.95 per copy.

We have again received financial aid from Playboy Foundation this year to do the same task. It has now been finished and will be mailed out to prisoners in December. Any non-prisoner who would like a copy may secure one by mailing an order to UFMCC Church Services. You will be billed $3.95 plus shipping and postage charges.

PRISONERS YELLOW PAGES is a state by state listing of all the service organizations willing to serve prisoners in some way that we have been able to locate. To our knowledge this is the only project like this available free to prisoners upon request. It also lists law libraries throughout the USA which are willing to provide some research service to prisoners by mail.

This year for the first time, we have begun a look towards an international approach. Our resources are extremely limited, since this was a change effected rather recently. However, we do have a few listings for Canada and even one for Holland this year. Hopefully in future editions, we will be able to have an expanded list of non-USA organizations as well.

Anyone who secures a copy of PRISONERS YELLOW PAGES would be asked to share with the Office of Institutional Ministry any additional organizations they may be aware of throughout the coming year.

THE 80's

CAN

BE OURS

---

fellowship family

ALBANY/SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

Members of Good News MCC joined MCC Syracuse for a church retreat on Lake Ontario. Rev. Shelley Hamilton, Northeast District Coordinator, led the retreat.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

MCC Boston voted to discontinue paying a fulltime pastor and to accept pastoral leadership on a voluntary and part time basis. They decided that the money usually allocated for pastoral salary and housing be spent on ministries, services and outreach for those in need outside the local church family. This plan will be in effect for six months at which time the congregation will evaluate the plan.

FORT MEYERS, FLORIDA

MCC of the Palms held a dedication ceremony for their new building. Rev. Joseph Gilbert, Southeast District Coordinator, preached and blessed the new building. Rev. George Covington, pastor of MCC of the Palms, officiated at the dedication service. A disco dance and buffet lunch were part of the weekend celebration.

BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA

MCC Bakersfield helped celebrate the March on Washington with a barbeque. About 60 were in attendance to support gay and lesbian rights.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Rev. Donald Johnson and Mark Lee were welcomed to Sydney with a dinner. They celebrated their 4th anniversary and Rev. Johnson performed his first official duties by receiving new members.

LONDON, ENGLAND

MCC London has moved into their new church building and with this move plans are underway for a broader outreach into the gay community. They have begun a midweek worship service and social evening.

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

Alpha & Omega have had their contract terminated by the Unitarian Church where they have been housed. They are in search of a new church home and are also looking for a pastor.

DENVER, COLORADO

The Education and Nurture Group of MCC of the Rockies sponsored Advent Renewal Groups which began the first week in December. The purpose of this program was to bring about a revival of the spiritual family feelings. In addition, a one day spiritual retreat was held.

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

The zoning board in Colorado Springs has ruled that MCC of Pikes Peak can no longer hold services in their present facility. They are looking for a new church home.

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

KMTV, an NBC affiliate, recently filmed a worship service at MCC Omaha, to be aired as part of a series on the gay community.

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

MCC Sacramento will be having a midnight worship service on New Year's Eve. The Rev. Elder Freda Smith will be preaching on "The 80's are ours." Following worship, at 12:01 a.m. they will celebrate with a victory breakfast. MCC Sacramento invites other churches to join them in spirit or in having a similar service.

PREVIOUS PROFESSIONS OF CLERGY

Editor's Note: This does not include the newly licensed ministers.

PREVIOUS PROFESSION (NON-RELIGIOUS):

College Professor	1
Principal	1
Teacher	12
Librarian	1
Director, Day Care Program	1
Social Worker	2
Counselor	1
Probation Officer	1
Executive Director	1
Hospital Administrator	2
Nurse	5
Mid-wife	1
Chemist	1
Medical Records Librarian	1
Medical Technician	1
Medical Corpsman	1
Psychology Technician	1
Management Consultant	1
Accountant	2
Office Manager	3
Administrative Assistant	2
Secretary	1
Transcriber	1
Clerical	14
Journalist	1
Insurance Underwriter	1
Auditor	1
Claims Adjuster	1
Insurance Manager	1
Insurance Agent	1
Managerial	6
Sales	7
Travel Agent	1
Banking	2
Shipping Clerk	1
Cashier	1
Airlines Clerk	1
Personnel	1
Zookeeper	1
Veterinary Assistant	1
Medical Technician	2
Medical Assistant	1
Nurse's Assistant	4
Student	2
Audio-Visual Technician	2
Photofinisher	1
Phone Repairs	1
Police Officer	1
Security Guard	1
Private Detective	1
Military	2
Truck Driver	2
Bar Owner	1
Bartender	1
Maitre D'	1
Waiter	1
Entertainer	1
Phlobotomist	1

Compiled by Rev. Marge Ragona

Task Force Created on Race Relations

The Elders of the UFMCC have begun to implement a resolution passed at the 1979 General Conference in Los Angeles last August by creating a Race Relations Task Force under the Commission on Christian Social Action.

The action at the October meeting of theBoard of Elders was a result of a resolution passed at the General Conference which said, "Whereas: the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches supports the belief that we are indeed a Church whose mission is to proclaim the Gospel to all people, everywhere,

"Whereas: The racial and ethnic composition of local churches throughout this Fellowship is evidence that the message of God's love for all people is not, in fact, being shared in those local churches with minorities due to the lack of active viable outreach to minority communities, and

"Whereas: Christianity calls us to fearlessly, joyously and actively oppose and and everything that obstructs the flow of the message of God's unconditional love for All People, and

"Whereas: The issue of racism is indeed such an obstruction, and

"Whereas: Racism has survived throughout this Fellowship mainly due to a lack of understanding of what it is, how it works or how to combat it: and

"Whereas: The successful elimination of racism is dependent upon the establishment of such educational programs and guidance,

"Be It Hereby Resolved, this commission (of Christian Social Action) proposes the establishment of a salaried or volunteer position of Race Relations Director who would be appointed by the Board of Elders, and work under the direction of the Christian Social Action Director, being accountable also to General Conference and the Board of Elders, whose duties would be as follows:

"1. Compile and distribute educational material in the area of race relations to local churches.

"2. Establish and direct a racism task force and continuously report to the Board of Elders and local churches of the growth and development of that committee.

"3. Serve as resource person to local churches in the area of race relations.

"4. Set up guidelines for establishing lines of communication between UFMCC and minority communities.

"5. Coordinate on a Fellowship level and direct on a local level programs geared at consciousness raising, education, assertiveness and leadership development in minority communities."

At the October Board of Elders' meeting in Washington, D.C., the Elders unanimously passed a resolution which established "a ten member Race Relations Task Force, under the direction of the Christian Social Action Director, the Board of Elders and the General Conference, and that it create the position of Race Relations Director to work with this Task Force."

The Race Relations Task Force will be a part of the Commission on Christian Social Action and under the direction of the Chair of that Fellowship commission, R. Adam DeBaugh. A director is currently being sought for the Task Force, though no salary money is in the Fellowship budget for this fiscal year (see box).

The Fellowship is also currently seeking people to serve on the Race Relations Task Force. All interested persons should contact R. Adam DeBaugh at the UFMCC Washington Field Office.

DeBaugh said, "This Task Force will be a very important one in the years to come as we as a Fellowship confront the racial differences that often separate people. I look forward to a great deal of progress for our Fellowship coming as a result of the work of the Race Relations Task Force. It will be important to have 10 very capable and hard working people to serve on the Task Force, just as the choice of Race Relations Director will be an important one, too. I call upon all UFMCC congregations to work with the new Race Relations Task Force as much as possible in the next two years."

Letters

After leaving the church--the straight, orthodox church of my growing up--out of anger and frustration several years ago, I found my way one day to the door of MCC, New York. I have been attending for almost two years now, surprised at my regularily, feeling whole and secure in the midst of a diverse gay family. I can say with conviction that my feeling welcome in MCC has a lot to do with the influence of Rev. Karen Zeigler and Rev. Shelley Hamilton, who in their radical application of the good news to the lives of gay people, provided me with the environment to grow and call myself once again, a Christian.

Ironically, one reason why I'm still attending is the climate of freedom which Karen, as pastor, has the gift of facilitating in our church. As a gay person and a Christian with an oppressive, guilty upbringing, my particular journey only thrives in the midst of freedom, and I run from authoritarianism as if it were death itself. I believe that God created humans to be free and gave them free will; somehow humans are too threatened by that freedom and continually shackle themselves to the chains of totalitarianism, orthodoxy, narrow, intolerant views (i.e., "I have the truth and you don't"). I wonder if that limiting of God's freedom shouldn't be named for what it is: a sin, a falling short of God's calling in our lives.

What disburbs me about this controversy is the labeling of Karen as "heretical." And it also makes me laugh. Because we are all heretics: all gay Christians are heretics. For we claim God's love for us in the face of fierce societal and religious disapproval by the Pharisees and the Sadducees of our day--the people who possess institutional authority by virtue of their claims to orthodoxy, i.e., "the truth." My journey, coming out as a gay person, has been the over-turning of my fear by embracing the feared labels of these people. Yes, I am Gay, Lesbian, and BAD in their eyes. Yes, I am a heretic and proud.

You can bet that I'm not going to stick around MCC to be burned as a "heretic." Let us not internalize the enemy and make them pigs in our heads. Let us not use the same oppressive tactics as the institutional church. MCC has created a place for people who have left "the church of orthodoxy" and have no where else to go. This is the last frontier for us, and unless we're accepted here--all of us, us heretics--it's out the door, never to return to any other Christian church. Let us embrace freedom, for it is God's will for our lives, acknowledging at the same time how painful it is to confront the complexity of truth, how threatening it is to embrace God's freedom as a gift.

Susan Eenigenburg
MCC, New York

Spotlight: *phil gallnitz*

t. earlye scott

The Board of Elders recently hired a new office manager for its International Headquarters in Los Angeles, CA.

Phil Gallnitz, 39, officially began his duties on December 15, 1979. Before becoming office manager Gallnitz was the director of church services.

Originally from Detroit, MI Gallnitz moved to Los Angeles in July with his spouse Richard O'Dell.

"I felt called to work for the general office. Although no definite commitment could be made and the present budget had not been approved, my mate and I felt that if it was a calling somehow God would show us the answer. Shortly after our arrival, we got our answer," Gallnitz explained.

The job of office manager is to assist the Board of Elders in improving communications between the General Office and the local MCC congregations. In addition Gallnitz will be in charge of the insurance program making certain it is run smoothly and as efficiently as possible. He will also be answering any inquiries and filling orders from churches as quickly as possible.

"I also see my duties as getting the best qualified people to work in the office," he said.

Gallnitz said that he forsees some changes in the office. One of these changes will be an increase in communications between the UFMCC headquarters and the local congregations. With this will come more general information distributed to churches in a shorter period of time.

"Of course there will undoubtedly be small changes taking place as we continue to grow and expand, but these will be gradual and over a much larger period of time," Gallnitz explained.

Gallnitz, who attended Lawrence Institute of Technology in Detroit, MI said he felt very strongly the position could best be filled by a qualified lay person. He said he got some of his experience when he served as an office manager in MCC Detroit, MI.

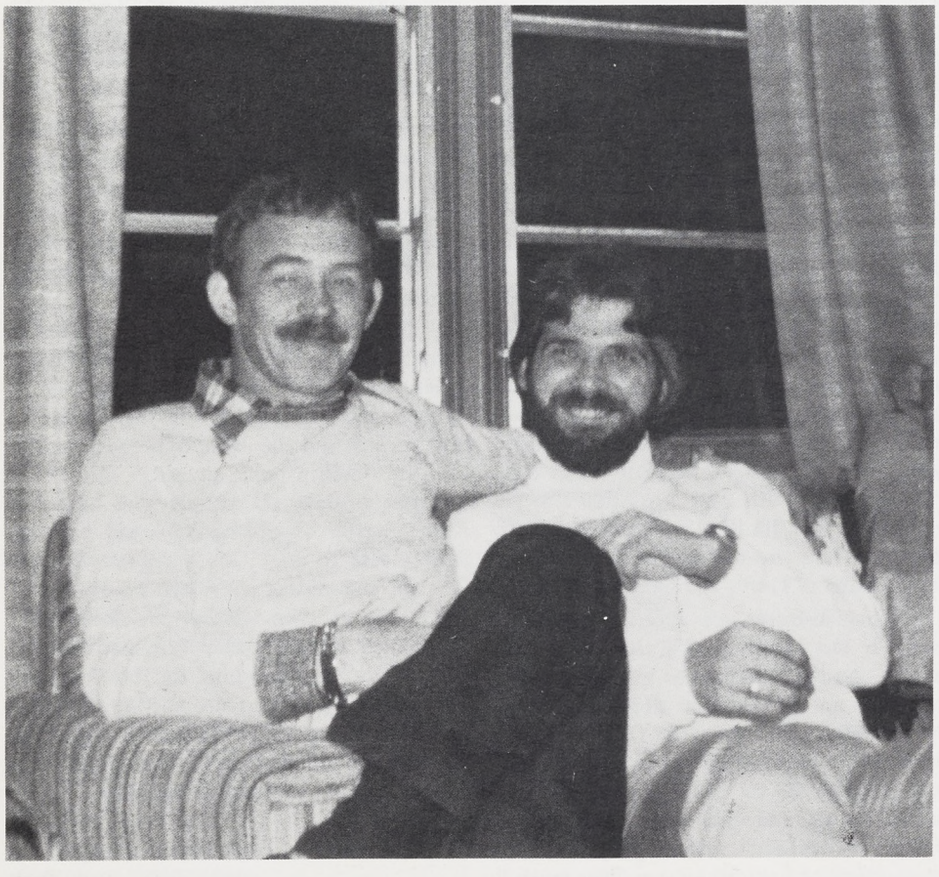
Before serving as office manager in Detroit, Gallnitz was a deacon, on the board of directors and helped initiate the prison ministry program there. He was also elected to the position of Project Administrator, overseeing all church projects.

"About five years ago I became involved in MCC Detroit. For the first time in my life I felt good about myself. Through all of the ups and downs MCC was always there helping."

He continued to explain his feelings about the Fellowship by saying he believes in the vision and is hopeful that the Fellowship from the local congregation to the Board of Elders continue to look ahead and plan for our next decade of growth, both in numbers and in spirituality.

"I also feel very strongly that it is going to take a personal commitment from each and every member and friend of MCC from the presently uninvolved lay person to the totally committed minister to fulfill the vision and commitment we have made. Troy's dream is turning into a reality," he said.

Gallnitz served in the military where he received letters of commendation and achievement. His undergraduate work was done in Business Administration and Human Resources.



OFFICE MANAGER APPOINTED

Phil Gallnitz (left), new UFMCC office manager, relaxes at home with his spouse, Richard O'Dell.

UFMCC CLERGY STATISTICS

SERVICE IN PRIOR DENOMINATION:

Pastor	34
Ass't Pastor	2
Youth Minister	7
Director of Religious Education	3
Elder	5
Deacon	2
Missionary	3
Salvation Army Officer	3
Evangelist	2
Chaplain	1
Minister of Music	1
Monk or Brother	7
Nun	1

Institutional Ministries ...

by Rev. Bob Arthur
Director, Institutional Ministries

As of General Conference, 1979, the Board of Elders restructured the institutional ministry program of UFMCC, creating the Office of Institutional Ministry, with the director responsible for coordinating the work done in that area for the entire Fellowship. We currently have outreaches in the USA, Canada, England, Australia, Finland, Panama, Poland, Holland and Germany.

We currently have 33 representatives of this ministry throughout the world who are dealing with nearly 2,000 prisoners. Here in the USA we are trying to expand that ministry through a lawsuit which we brought about against the Federal Bureau of Prisons. That case is now scheduled to be heard in March, 1980. We have also appealed a decision of a Michigan court barring us from conducting worship services in the Michigan State Penitentiary.

We are a sponsoring agency of the Prisoner Visitation and Support Committee which has the permission of the Federal Bureau of Prisons to visit any federal prisoner. I attended their annual workshop/meeting in Philadelphia last month and spoke to them about the needs of gay prisoners. As a result, several of their approved visitors have volunteered to visit our prisoners in the prisons to which they are assigned if requested by our prisoners.

The National Council of Churches has a group called the National Interreligious Task Force on Criminal Justice, part of which is the Joint Strategy and Action Commission. They have called into existence a work group on prison ministry, of which I am a member. We have developed a paper which is scheduled to be presented to the National Council of Churches in January. If accepted by the National Council, we could find ourselves with even more increasing support from member churches in the work which UFMCC is doing in the area of prison ministry.

We are growing, and appreciate the growing interest within the Fellowship for the task that we have before us. We covet your continued prayers for our work.

DISTRICT CONFERENCES

AUSTRALIA

The District of Australia will hold their conference the end of January. The Rev. Elder Jeri Ann Harvey will attend the conference and visit all of the churches in Australia.

NORTHEAST

The Northeast District Conference was recently held at MCC New York. A special worship service was presented by the Lesbian/Gay Task Force of the 1979 Spring class on Liberation Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York. The theme of the conference was "Stepping out on Faith" and several workshops were held relating to the theme. The model for the workshops was similar to Operation Resurrection. The workshops included Innovative ministries, race relations, Christian social action, Theological development, feminist issues and expanding the Northeast District. Goals were set for the next 10 years. Among these goals were to have 10 new churches in the district. One of the social events was a Cabaret/ Coffee house where each church group presented a skit.

SOUTH ATLANTIC

Over 100 people attended the South Atlantic District Conference where Rev. Nancy Radcliff was elected assistant district coordinator. The conference voted to tithe 5% to Home Missions and targetted Charlotte, NC and Chattanooga, TN. They hope to have groups there by May. Nashville MCC has targetted Huntsville and Clarksville, AL.

SOUTHWEST

The Southwest District Conference was held in North Hollywood, CA and hosted by MCC in the Valley. The weekend activities began with a dance with the proceeds going to distant congregations to help them with travel expenses.

Five workshops were held. R. Adam DeBaugh, from the Washington Field Offices, facilitated the workshops on Social Action and Ecumenical Relations and the UFMCC. Helping You Help the Alcoholic and Drug Addict was facilitated by Chuck Romans. A workshop on Interpersonal Communications and Inclusive Language were also held. Marge Ragona facilitated the Inclusive Language workshop.

Preaching during district conference were Rev. Louis de Spain, MCC Albuquerque, NM, Rev. Nancy Wilson, Clerk of the Board of Elders, Rev. Bob Arthur, district coordinator and Rev. Fred Pattison, MCC Phoenix, AR.

Rev. Jeffrey Pulling, dean of Samaritan Theological Institute, held a seminar on Communion.

The weekend ended with a dinner theater. "There's Something Wrong With You," a play by Jean Gralley, chairperson of the Commission on Laity, was presented.

MID-ATLANTIC

The eight churches in the Mid-Atlantic District recently held their conference in Richmond, VA. The theme for the conference was "Deepening the Spiritual Life." Five workshops were held dealing with the conference theme. The MCC Baltimore choir sang and a sock hop was held which was sponsored by the social committee of MCC Richmond.

Rev. Frank Murr, pastor of MCC Washington, D.C. was elected as Assistant District Coordinator.

SOUTHEAST

The "Wounded Healer" was the theme of the Southeast District Conference. This topic was explored through meditation, prayer, language, music, worship and human sexuality.

ELDERS FORM DEPARTMENT OF ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

By R. Adam DeBaugh

The UFMCC Board of Elders has created a new Department of Ecumenical Relations and appointed the Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, clerk of the Board of Elders, and R. Adam DeBaugh, Director of the Washington Field Office, as co-directors.

The new department, by having its co-directors on both coasts of the U.S. (Rev. Wilson is based in Los Angeles at UFMCC headquarters), symbolically reaches out across the U.S. and also overseas to other nations as well.

The new department will have as its initial emphasis four areas, outlined in a proposal approved by the Elders at their October meeting in Washington, D.C.

The initial four areas the new Department of Ecumenical Relations will be involved in are:

Ecumenical Organizations

The Department of Ecumenical Relations will coordinate the UFMCC's involvement with ecumenical and inter-religious organizations. Such organizations include (but are not limited to) the National Council of Churches, the National Council of Community Churches, the World Council of Churches, the Ecumenism Research Agency, the NCC Commission on Women in Ministry, the NCC Joint Strategy and Action Coalition, the Washington Inter-religious Staff Council, and other national and international ecumenical and inter-religious organizations. It would also include the membership of individual MCC congregations in local and regional councils of churches and other ecumenical groups, finding out about such local involvement, supporting and encouraging it, and assisting in whatever ways possible. Final decisions on whether to join such groups as the National and World Councils of Churches would, of course, be the province of the Board of Elders, but the Department will be able to do preliminary investigation into such membership and coordinate the activities of the UFMCC as official observer status at meetings, non-member involvement in such groups, etc.

Work With Other Denominations

The Department of Ecumenical Relations will coordinate many of the contacts between the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches and other denominational national staffs, leadership, judicatories, boards and agencies. It will put our agencies and boards in touch with other denominational agencies doing similar work, for instance. It will help to with other denominational agencies doing similar work, for instance. It will help to explain the UFMCC to other religious bodies. It will work to educate the other religious bodies about areas of special concern and ministry to the UFMCC. It will formulate responses to be approved by the Board of Elders to actions by other denominations. It will "lobby the churches" on Gay rights and other issues of concern to the UFMCC. In so doing, it will be undertaking part of the role of the Washington Field Office and thus save duplication of effort.

Religious Gay Organizations

The Department of Ecumenical Relations will work with the Gay caucuses of the other denominations (Dignity, Integrity, Affirmation, etc.), providing them with support, information, resources, and encouragement. This, also, is a task already assigned to the Washington Field Office and fits perfectly into the new joint role of this office.

Gay Seminarians

The Department of Ecumenical Relations will work to assist and enable Gay women and men who are in seminaries, both UFMCC people and those from other denominations. We already have a network of UFMCC people who are studying at seminaries all across the U.S. and in other countries, in seminaries and schools of theology of many different denominations. The Department will try to identify our own people in seminaries, and help them educate other seminarians, faculty and staff. We can provide support for closetted seminary students and faculty. We can assist with providing materials, teaching classes and leading seminars. We can help, as many MCC students have in the past, with the creation of Gay caucuses at seminaries. We can help build networks between Gay seminarians, not only in the UFMCC but in other denominations as well.

These four areas of involvement for the new Department of Ecumenical Relations will require a lot of help. We are calling on each UFMCC congregation to send us two things. First we need a list of any of your members who are attending seminary, with their names, addresses, school and status at the school.

Secondly, we need to know the status of the involvement of each local congregation with ecumenical organizations in its area and with other Gay religious organizations. A questionnaire will be mailed soon, but any information you can send us would be helpful.

(reprinted from *A New Day*)

Mary's Song

Luke 1:46-55

God,
Because of you I sing a new song;
my spirit is full with celebrating,
for you have had compassion on me
have understood my humanness
have been aware of my
simplicity
frailness
weakness.
I am blessed among people --
It shall be remembered by those who follow me
that God has touched my life -- ,
That you who are magnificent in your holiness
unrivaled in your majesty
unequaled in your power
have had mercy on me -- one of your created ones.
History tells me of your caring concern for my ancestors;
they speak of lives made new
enemies defeated,
bodies healed,
spirits rebuked.
The poor speak of your rich blessing;
the humble of being lifted up
the proud of being cast down
the rich of being sent away empty.
Yes, those who have sought you
have found you;
into the outstretched arms of the longing
you have heaped love
peace
provision
comfort
hope.
To Abraham you were merciful;
To Abraham's decendants you were faithful;
To me you have proved
(YOU WHO HAVE NOTHING TO PROVE)
that you are faithful
consistent
committed.
Is it any wonder that my grateful lips repeat daily
the mercies of my God.

Rev. Pepper Shields
November 8, 1979

Ms. Birdie Says:

KIDS COUNT!

Do You Have A Sunday School?

Do You Have A Children's Time During Service?

Do You Have A Youth Program?

Do You Have Kids In Church?

Ms. Birdie, who did the children's sermon at General Conference, thinks these are important questions. If you have materials aimed at the youth of UFMCC, the Christian Education Department would appreciate copies to be made available to all of our churches. WE CARE.

Brought To You By
THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF UFMCC

Gay men, Lesbians march for rights on Capitol

The National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights attracted about 100,000 people from around the world. This was the first national demonstration in support of gay rights ever held in this country.

The March which took months of planning called for the repeal of all anti-gay laws, the passage of a comprehensive federal gay rights bill, and the issuance of a presidential executive order outlawing discrimination for sexual orientation. In addition, demands were made to stop anti-gay discrimination in child custody cases and for the protection of young gays against oppressive laws.

Every state in the Union and over 20 countries were represented in the two mile march which passed Congress and the White House and continued up Pennsylvania Avenue.

A post March rally was held on the grounds of the Washington Monument where about 30 speakers addressed the crowd. Other related activities included the Third World Conference of Lesbians and Gays, discussion groups, religious services and political caucuses and lobbying.

Social activities included a free concert at the Washington Monument and dances throughout the city.

During the March Jerry Falwell held a prayer vigil, in hopes that homosexuals would see their sin and repent.

Various religious groups participated and supported the Sunday March. MCC was among the largest contingent with most of the Board of Elders participating. Other religious organizations were the Gay Mormons, Dignity, Integrity, Gay Christian Science, Gay Jewish groups, Affirmation, Seventh Day Adventists, Lutherans Concerned, Presbyterian Gay Caucus and UCC Gay Caucus.

MCC Washington held a worship service Sunday evening with about 900 in attendance. Moderator of the Board of Elders, the Rev. Troy Perry, preached.

World Church Extension Sunday

Advent is a time of preparation . . .
BEGIN preparing now in your congregations

Feb. 10 1980

a special time of giving for new MCC ministries

—Western Europe—Hispanic Americas—Nigeria—New Zealand—
—And Beyond—?—?—?—You can help us fill in the blanks—

You can make a difference in the next decade

SPONSORED BY THE BOARD OF WORLD CHURCH EXTENSION

LAY CONCERNS

Jean Gralley

LAY CONCERNS (now the Commission on the Laity) was originally founded in 1977 to 'enhance the flow of communication" between the laity, clergy and the Board of Elders of UFMCC. Since then we have found that communication makes things happen, that it is first in a chain reaction of communication, community and service.

Our experience with communication and service in the lay community is leading us down new paths into the "ministry of the laity." By our experience we can affirm that it is a ministry of *all* lay people, not just the titled laity, and that it is integral to the purpose and nature of the church. By our activities, we are committed to promoting an understanding of ministry and to encouraging its development in the laity of our Fellowship.

Communication

When the present chair accepted the Elders' appointment in October 1978, the commission was in a formative stage, having just six members. Today it is composed of 11 members from areas that include Australia and the United Kingdom. Each member has been requested to develop a "contact" in each local church body of their district. These contacts have no special standing but fulfill an important service by aiding 2-way communication between their congregations and their district Commission on the Laity representative. The responsibilities of the district rep are two-fold: Firstly, at the *district level* --the district rep serves as *a)* facilitator of the Lay Concerns meeting held every district conference; *b)* as the representative (having voice without vote) of the concerns and recommendations raised at that Lay Meeting to the district business meeting; *c)* representative of the laity on the district Board of Home Missions, and *d)* facilitator of activities initiated at the district Lay Meeting but extending beyond the district conference. Secondly, at the *Fellowship level* -- each CLC member is responsible for actively communicating to the commission chair their laity's concerns and reports of any activities generated by COL in their district.

The district representative carries a major responsibility for the communication channels at the district level. *It is important for all district lay people to consider this when electing their lay representative*

Over the past year, the activities of the chair have been to provide resources and materials to all members, cross-pollenate projects and ideas from one part of the fellowship to another, to provide "Information Sheets" for the input of lay concerns to each district rep, pass concerns and reports of the commission's activities onto the Board of Elders, to establish a page in *In Unity* (for the dissemination of lay issues and perspectives), and, finally, to establish ties with the World Council of Churches' Department of the Laity for the exchange of information and materials.

Community

Community is a natural byproduct of communication. Just as the district Lay Meeting provides the opportunity for laypeople to congregate, share concerns and to grow closer as a communicating family, COL is also a "*Yes You Can*" ethic for the laity. It enables laypeople *as a community* to develop activities that will answer their concerns. It encourages positive ways to build up the church family, to "edify the body." And, because the resulting programs are developed out of people's own perceived needs, they are, consequently, *meaningful* avenues for people's service.

Service

These programs have been developed through the work of COL: seminars exploring the history and identity of the laity; district newsletters; deacon training programs; "conflict management" workshops (enabling laypeople to understand and help resolve conflict in the local church); lay-clergy dialogs; creation and distribution of devotional guides; a census of religious backgrounds in the district; presentation of lay-maintained service programs in the district; presentations by district church families of their history and identity; creation and publication of The Church Body Book: A Layperson's Guide to MCC (adapted for use in 4 districts); development of "family units" for prayer and study; "ministering to ministers" program; lay-maintained conferences and spiritual retreats; creation of a taskforce committed to lay leadership training in the district.

The Future of the Laity

"Productive work" in the Commission on the Laity is defined as involving the *broad base* of laypeople, hopefully avoiding the false gains of a "star system" which, like quasi-clerical lay hierarchies, tend to leave the average layperson just as apathetic and uninvolved. The benefit to both the districts and fellowship is a laity that perceives its power to benefit the church, its worth in the church, its identity *as* the church.

We recognize that true ministry has been, since the beginning of the church, not status but service. Because this has not always been affirmed, ministry has not always been recognized in the laity. This commission wishes to remain firm in its pursuit of service over status, believing that God uses laypeople *where* they are *as* they are. We also recognize that although lay ministry, like its clerical counterpart, is often thought of as an individual endeavor, it can function best as a team ministry of *laity in community*. It embraces all service that "edifies the body," strengthens the community, matures the faithful, reaches out in honesty and love and evidences that for us to grow as Christians is to grow closer.

Our laity is strong and resourceful. Our voice will become clearer and our service more evident as we struggle to grow into partnership with our clergy in the mission of this Fellowship. Together we share this common mission because we have been brought together by a common cause; the Body of Christ breathes new life when ministry is affirmed as the measure of growth in *all* its members.

Jean Gralley is the chair of the Commission on the Laity. This article is excerpted from COL's report to General Conference IX in Los Angeles

New Freedom Riders Travel

By Rev. Elder Troy Perry

October 10th we boarded buses in San Francisco for the Amtrack Terminal in Oakland, California to start our ride on the Gay Freedom Train that would take us to Washington, D.C. for our National March and Rally.

At noon we boarded the San Francisco Zephyr under the nervous stares of the Southern Pacific staff. Seventy gay men and lesbians started the journey in one of the cars of the 13-car train (several hundred more demonstrators were to join us along the way). Right away the surly looking conductor was nicknamed "Nurse Cratchett" because, as one gay said, "he's already ordering us around." One of his first official acts was to lead the train crew on an enforcement mission to stamp out any smoking in our car. Then he barred us from hanging banners from the outside of the train and from leaving the train at stops, which put a temporary cramp in our whistlestopping plans.

We arrived at our first stop, Sacramento, California and were met not only by T.V., radio and the newspapers, but about 50 of our Church members and supporters led by Vice Moderator of the Board of Elders, Reverend Freda Smith and her other half, Kathleen Meadows. The T.V. recorded the cheers and whoops of everybody waiting on the platform. Robin Tyler, the feminist comic, who shared with us at General Conference at the Christian Social Action Rally, and I held the first of what was to be many press conferences along the way. After Sacramento the mood aboard the train picked up. At the last stop of the day, we picked more people up in Reno, Nevada. I went to bed.

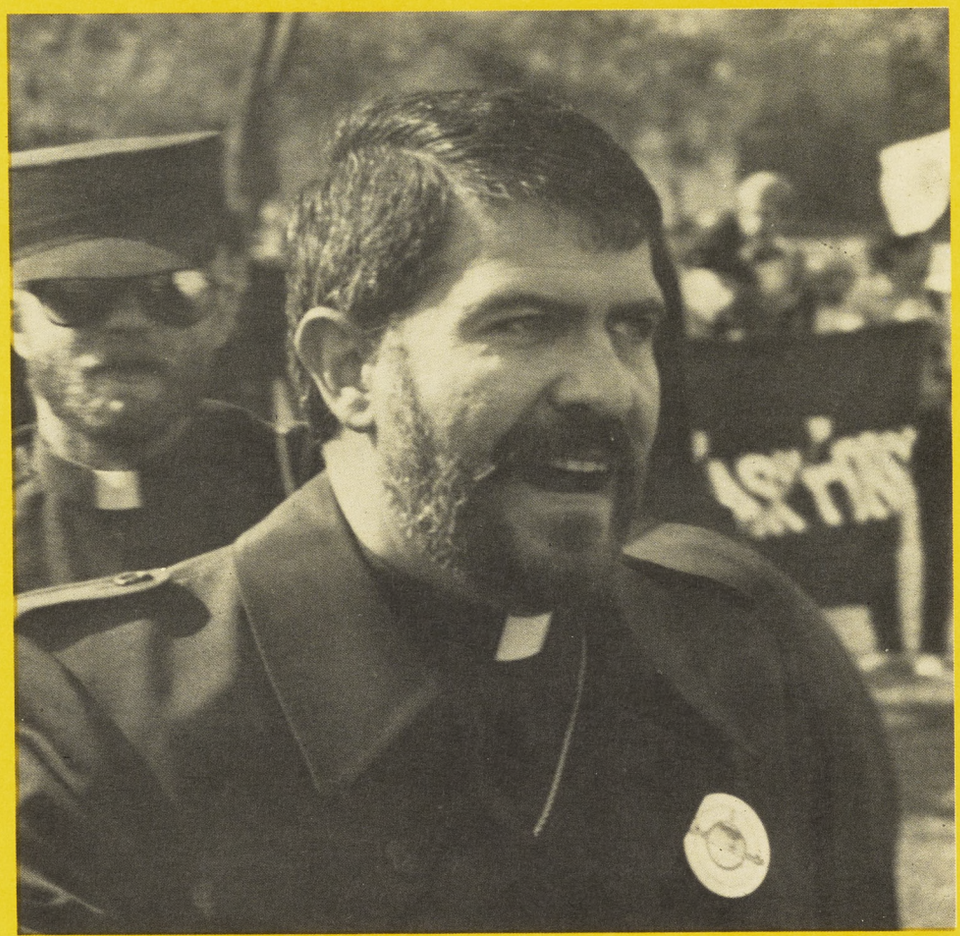
About 5:30 A.M. Robin and her lover, Torie Osborn, woke me up banging on the door of my bedroom and telling me that we had arrived early in Ogden, Utah. In Ogden we ended up having a curious confrontation. A Pentecostal minister, the Rev. Robert Harris, tried lying down on the tracks to hold up the train. Fortunately, he waited until it had stopped. Bible in hand, and carrying a large sign reading: "Homosexuals--you Devils are not welcome here," the pin stripe-suited minister thundered at us, "the power of God is against you, and he does not appreciate you being here. Repent your sin." "Welcome to Utah everybody" joked the Reverend Bob Waldrop, our M.C.C. Pastor from Salt Lake City. The Salt Lake City Church narrowly escaped being burned down six weeks before. His automobile had been arsoned at the same time and had been completely destroyed. A woman reporter in a red windbreaker reassured us, "He says this sort of thing to everybody, so don't feel bad. He's always lying down to protest everything from welfare mothers to the devils in the legislature." After about 20 minutes in that uncomfortable position, illuminated by the headlights of eight police cars, he decided there was more action farther down the train. The agitated clergyman, once a one-term Utah legislator who is running for Mayor of Ogden, finally propped himself up against the side of the train, but quickly stood up to gales of laughter when the train moved off. Just before we left, everyone from the train and Reverend Waldrop and the group from Salt Lake City held hands, sang songs and prayed for the success of the March.

Our next stop was Cheyenne, Wyoming where we were met by two supporters and another person carrying a sign with the words, "Go Anita Bryant." After Cheyenne, we traveled to Denver where about 100 gay people met us, including the staff of M.C.C. of the Rockies.

We were shocked when we arrived in Lincoln, Nebraska and discovered 28 people waiting for us with bouquets of flowers at 2:30 A.M. We had not expected anyone to be there. Everyone just hugged and cried. It was beautiful. In Omaha 4 MCC'rs met the train at 3:30 A.M.

The next day we changed trains from the San Francisco Zephyr to the Broadway Limited in Chicago. During the four-hour wait all of us marched from the train station to Daley Plaza for a rally put together for us by Reverend Jay Deacon, Pastor of Good Shepherd Parish M.C.C. and Editor of The Gay Christian. The rally was well attended by the press and people.

Once we got aboard the train for the



Rev. Elder Troy Perry marches with the MCC delegation in Washington, D.C. Also pictured is Rev. Randy Cypherd, pastor of MCC in the Valley, North Hollywood, CA.

Cross Country To March Site

last leg of our trip, the stops became more often. Fort Wayne, Indiana (Reverend Chuck Steele and the MCC congregation met us), Lima, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Philadelphia and finally, Washington, D.C.

After three days on the train, it was time to disembark. The rest of the weekend was like a collage. Five of the Board of Elders met us in Union Station with about 500 other persons. The Sylvan Theater where I spoke to about 10,000 who had come to our gay concert. The next morning going to the mall to meet the UFMCC contingent; seeing MCC's from all over America. Standing on the stage at the rally after the march and seeing and speaking to over 100,000 of my sisters and brothers. Preaching that night to over 600 people at the Washington, D.C. M.C.C. where Reverend Larry Uhrig is Pastor. Knowing in my gut that something wonderful had happened. Being made aware once again that we will win and knowing truly that we are not afraid anymore!

ABOVE: Holding their banner, members and friends of MCC from around the world participate in the first March on the Capitol. BELOW: The Gay Men's Chorus from Los Angeles, CA assemble to march for Gay and Lesbian rights.

Where were you ten years ago?

Compiled by Jean Grailey

We are at the end of a year and of an amazing decade. With the advent of gay consciousness, feminism and the growth of the Universal Fellowship, the seventies have meant for many of us the complete transformation of our lifestyles, if not our lives.

IN UNITY polled many of the Fellowship's clergy and laity and posed the question, "Where were you ten years ago?" Following are many of the surprising responses we received. They attest to the fact that God really does continue to work miracles in our lives.

Happy new decade!

Rev. Don Borbe:
"Ten years ago I was running a Dairy Queen in Sacramento, California."
(-- Don Borbe, former pastor of MCC Philadelphia, is pastor of MCC Portland, Oregon.)

Rev. Elder Jeri Ann Harvey:
"Ten years ago I was in San Francisco working at Blue Shield, going to Maude's Bar and being a good non-practicing Jew. Jesus was what you said when you hit your thumb!"
(--Jeri Ann Harvey, pastor of MCC Los Angeles, is a newly-elected Elder of the Fellowship. She is also a former district coordinator of the South Central District.)

Rev. Michael England:
"Ten years ago I was a Southern Baptist seminary student working with street people in the Haight-Ashbury district in San Francisco and trying to work hard enough to suppress my self, my gayness. I read the Time article about MCC LA and thought it was pretty silly. Living just outside San Francisco, I was all alone--didn't even know where there were gay bars, let alone MCC!"
(-- Michael England is serving on the staff of MCC San Francisco as Christian Education Director. He is former chair of the UFMCC Board of Campus Ministry.)

Rev. Jay Deacon:
Ten years ago he was working for Dave Wilkerson's "Teen Challenge" in New York City handing out tracts to homosexuals.
(--Jay Deacon is the pastor of Good Shepherd Parish in Chicago, the founding pastor of MCC Hartford, editor of The Gay Christian and district coordinator of the Great Lakes District.)

Rev. Charlie Arehart:
"Ten years ago I was a student at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky in my middler year of the Master of Divinity degree program. I was dating a very loving daughter of a United Methodist minister and was really trying to become heterosexual. I believed that someday God would deliver me of my homosexual feelings."
(-- Charlie Arehart is pastor of MCC of the Rockies, Denver, is an Elder of the Fellowship, a former district coordinator of the Mid-Central district and is currently a Doctor of Ministry candidate at Iliff Seminary.)"

Rev. "Buff" Fisher:
"Since I was "gay before it was stylish" I was living in Venice, Calif. My life consisted of bars, barrooms and bars in jails from time to time. One led to the other. I was lost, confused, with no real purpose in life, suicidal and an alcoholic. Looking at the world through the bottom of a bottle. "Self-destructive." And then in the Spring of 72 through a non-gay black man, I was led to MCC Venice mission (West Bay MCC). "I believe in miracles. I am one."
(-- "Buff" Fisher is pastor of MCC Tucson, Arizona.)

Rev. Larry Uhrig:
"Ten years ago I was in my middle year of seminary in the Methodist Theological School in Ohio. I was in the process of dealing with my being a gay person and attempting to minister within the United Methodist Church. I had seen Troy's picture in the Advocate and thought, 'Isn't that nice that he is doing this ministry, now I don't have to.' "
(-- Larry Uhrig is pastor of MCC Washington D.C. and serves on the Ministerial Credentials and Affairs Committee (MCAC).)

T. Earlye Scott:
"In the closet - where else! I was plotting and planning even then to become a great success and looking forward to being able to live in a manner in which I wanted to become accustomed. I was beginning my teaching career which would last one decade."
(-- T. Earlye Scott is a freelance writer and journalist She is the author of In Unity's regular feature "The Bottom Line. ")

R. Adam DeBaugh:
"Ten years ago I was graduating from college and beginning work in politics and newspaper work in Connecticut. I knew I was gay then, but didn't have either that word or a good feeling about it. I had theoretically been a Christian all my life, but didn't really feel comfortable or happy in any of the churches I visited, and couldn't even dream of combining a good feeling about my sexual orientation (which I didn't have anyway) with my religious faith (which was pretty rocky to begin with)."
(-- R. Adam DeBaugh is UFMCC Social Action Director in Washington, D. C. and also co-chair of the Department of Ecumenical Relations.)

Rev. Bob Darst:
"Ten years ago I had become an active member of MCC-Los Angeles while it was still meeting at the Encore Theater in Hollywood, taking my original Exhorter classes from Troy in his office at the old parsonage."
(-- Rev Bob Darst is the newly-ordained pastor of MCC Omaha and district coordinator of the Mid-Central District.)

Rev. Brent Hawkes:
"I had just given up going to the local Baptist Church every Sunday and was wondering if I would ever be able to worship in a positive fulfilling manner with a group of Christians again."
(-- Brent Hawkes is pastor of MCC Toronto, Canada. He also chairs the Inclusive Language Task Force.)

Rev. Roger Webb:
"Ten years ago I was a lonely draft dodger in Canada who had only been out 6 months in the gay world. My whole interest then was being a 6-night-a-week-bar-fly covering up desperation."
(-- Roger Webb is pastor of MCC Santa Barbara, California.)

Rev. David Farrell:
"Ten years ago I was lost, lonely, frightened, confused - full of religion, empty of faith. Drinking alcoholically, trapped in a destructive, loveless relationship. I had few friends, little hope, no God. Everything is different now."
(-- David Farrell is pastor of MCC San Diego.)

Rev. Jose Mojica:
"Ten years ago I was living in the closet condemning myself for being gay. During these last 10 years I have had a drastic change in my life. I'm now openly gay and proud of it. I'm now helping others to accept themselves. From a frustrated Christian I have become a successful minister in the UFMCC. Praise God."
(—Jose Mojica is district coordinator of the Hispanic Americas. He will soon be travelling to Latin America and Brazil for the Fellowship. Jose also serves on the Task Force on Inclusive Language. He was founding pastor of MCC Hispana, New York.)

Jean Gralley:
"Ten years ago I was an odd, asexual and lonely high school senior. I didn't care for dating, church, or any other "wholesome" activities my parents were anxious for me to take up. My best friend was my piano teacher, an equally odd 70-year-old woman. I practiced non-stop, wrote music, and prepared for conservatory, hoping a career in music would allow me to remain odd and asexual which was pretty much my appraisement of my future."
(-- Jean Gralley is chair of the Commission on the Laity. She is the originator of the "Layperson's Guide to MCC" and the MCC skit, "There's Something Wrong With You. ")

Rev. Jim Glyer:
"Ten years ago I was living in Los Angeles and ending a twenty-eight year marriage. I was also engaged in the process of leaving the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. I still had not accepted my gayness and was involved in my effort to get "healed" by psycho-therapy. Life was stormy for me and I was confused and hurting. It was the dark before the dawn."
(-- Rev. Jim Glyer is pastor of MCC Kansas City. He is a member of the MCAC and author of the "Lenten Living Room" series.)

Rev. Arlene Ackerman:
"Ten years ago I was Director of a Christian coffeehouse in Lodi, Calif. I was gay, believing I may be going to hell (but praying for God to make me straight). Closeted, scared and celebate."
(-- Arlene Ackerman is on staff at MCC Portland. She and her spouse have just celebrated their 9th anniversary.)

Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson:
"Ten years ago I was beginning my sophomore year at Allegheny College, having decided to become a religion major. I was active in the anti-war movement and did pregnancy counselling!"
(-- Rev Nancy Wilson is presently Clerk of the Board of Elders. She has been pastor of MCC Boston, Worcester and Detroit and has served as district coordinator in the Northeast and Great Lakes districts. She was recently elected for her second term as Elder.)

Rev. Lee Carlton:
"Ten years ago I was pastor of a Church of God in Marquette, Michigan, and Auxilliary Protestant Chaplain at K.I. Sawyer A.F.B., Michigan. In November, 1969, I told my superiors about my homosexual feelings (I had no consciousness of my gayness at that time). I was asked to resign my pastorate and moved with my wife and infant daughter to Tampa, Florida. In December, 1969, I walked into my first gay bar and the first three persons I met later helped me build MCC in Tampa."
(-- Lee Carlton is currently pastor of MCC Jacksonville, Florida. He has been the founding pastor of MCC Tampa, former pastor of MCC Los Angeles and MCC Sydney, Australia, has served as Executive Sec. of the Board of World Extension and former Church Extension Coordinator of both Australasia and the United Kingdom.)

Rev. Ed Hougen:
"Ten years ago I was the youth minister of the 1st Congregational Church, South Hadley, Massachusetts. I was in the closet and wondering whether I'd ever have a gay experience. One of the members of the church group was Bobby Stevens. Six years later he and I became lovers. Can anyone doubt there is a God!"
(-- Ed Hougen is pastor of MCC Boston and a member of the Inclusive Language Task Force. He is a former district coordinator of the Northeast.)

Rev. Shelley Hamilton:
"Ten years ago I was drunk and living in the streets of Norristown, Pennsylvania."
(-- Shelley Hamilton is a student at Union Theological Seminary and is district coordinator of the Northeast. She is the former pastor of MCC State College and MCC Worcester, Massachusetts.)

Michael Mank:
"Ten years ago I was looking for an effective involvement, dissatisfied with available opportunities, and yet feeling guilty for doing nothing! I was on the brink of an experience that soon changed "all the above." (I had attended the L.A. church - MCC-SF would soon form). Ten years ago I had not met my new family. I felt apart but was soon to be set apart!"
(-- Michael Mank is chair of the ByLaws Committee and is a member of the Commission on the Laity, representing the Northwest district. He is also the composer of the UFMCC song, "I'm Not Afraid Anymore" and has held numerous positions in MCC San Francisco).

16 new churches since conference

UFMCC is growing. We have 16 new churches since General Conference. We have 5 new groups in Nigeria, 2 in the United Kingdom and 9 in the United States.

NIGERIA

MCC Ulonna North Farm Settlement

MCC Umu Awa Ogee

MCC Obinikpa

MCC Ezinachi

MCC Mbawsi

UNITED KINGDOM

MCC Northhampton

MCC Bournemouth

UNITED STATES

Oasis MCC, Phoenix, AR

MCC of the Ozarks, Fayetteville, AK

MCC Little Rock, AK

MCC Bakersfield, CA

MCC Diablo Valley, Concord, CA

Pikes Peak MCC, CO

MCC Columbia, MO

MCC Springfield, MO

MCC Santa Barbara, CA

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